

Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation  
Water Resources Division  
Water Rights Bureau

**ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT**  
**For Routine Actions with Limited Environmental Impact**

**Part I. Proposed Action Description**

1. *Applicant/Contact name and address:* Kenneth Reaser and James Wheat III, 6504 North 40th Place, Paradise Valley AZ 85253
2. *Type of action:* Application For Beneficial Water Use Permit 76LJ 30071027
3. *Water source name:* Whitefish Lake
4. *Location affected by project:* Tract 2BA in the SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 22, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County and approximately 1.5 miles northwest of Whitefish
5. Narrative summary of the proposed project, purpose, action to be taken, and benefits: The DNRC shall issue a water use permit if an applicant proves the criteria in 85-2-311 MCA are met.

The applicant proposes to divert water from Whitefish Lake, by means of a pump, from January 1 through December 31 at 22 GPM (.05 CFS) up to 0.44 AF for domestic use January 1 through December 31, from a point in the SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 22, Township 31N, Range 22W. The place of use is generally located on Tract 2BA in the SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>SW<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>NE<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub> of Section 22, Township 31N, Range 22W, Flathead County and approximately 1.5 miles northwest of Whitefish.

6. Agencies consulted during preparation of the Environmental Assessment:  
(include agencies with overlapping jurisdiction)

Montana Natural Heritage Program  
Natural Resources and Conservation Service soil maps  
Montana Department of Environmental Quality  
United States Fish and Wildlife Wetland Mapper  
Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks

**Part II. Environmental Review**

1. **Environmental Impact Checklist:**

**PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

## **WATER QUANTITY, QUALITY AND DISTRIBUTION**

**Water quantity** - Assess whether the source of supply is identified as a chronically or periodically dewatered stream by DFWP. Assess whether the proposed use will worsen the already dewatered condition.

*Determination:* Whitefish Lake is not identified by DFWP as being a chronically or periodically dewatered stream.

**Water quality** - Assess whether the stream is listed as water quality impaired or threatened by DEQ, and whether the proposed project will affect water quality.

*Determination:* Whitefish Lake, in the reporting cycle 2014, was conditioned as minor-moderate impairment. Aquatic life impairment is associated with management decisions, primarily the introduction of mysis shrimp. Sedimentation increase appears to be associated in part with logging and road building. Fish consumption advisory exists for mercury and PCBs. Drinking water quality from this source should be checked. No impacts.

**Groundwater** - Assess if the proposed project impacts ground water quality or supply. If this is a groundwater appropriation, assess if it could impact adjacent surface water flows.

*Determination:* No impacts.

**DIVERSION WORKS** - Assess whether the means of diversion, construction and operation of the appropriation works of the proposed project will impact any of the following: channel impacts, flow modifications, barriers, riparian areas, dams, well construction.

*Determination:* Water will be pumped from Whitefish Lake via a pump system consisting of a Franklin 3-Wire QuickPAK 20-3WQP 1.5 which includes a 20 GPM tri-seal pump, 1.5 hp motor, monodrive variable frequency controller and a pressure sensor. The pump will be located inside a 6-inch casing on a stand out in the lake. A 1.25-inch PVC transmission main connected to the pump will convey water for approximately 210 feet to the lake house and a 1.25-inch transmission main conveys water back to a lakeshore cabin. Outdoor sprinklers will deliver water for domestic lawn and garden irrigation. The total head pressure to obtain a minimum service pressure of 60 psi at the primary residence is 201 feet. Pump curve and specifications were included in the application. Permitting for pump in the lake is through another agency.

## **UNIQUE, ENDANGERED, FRAGILE OR LIMITED ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES**

**Endangered and threatened species** - Assess whether the proposed project will impact any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special concern," or create a barrier to the migration or movement of fish or wildlife. For groundwater, assess whether the proposed project, including impacts on adjacent surface flows, would impact any threatened or endangered species or "species of special concern."

*Determination:* The Montana Natural Heritage Program was contacted to determine if there are any threatened or endangered fish, wildlife, plants or aquatic species or any "species of special

concern”, that could be impacted by the proposed project. They identified the following animal and plant species that are threatened, or have special status, that are located regionally: Wolverine, Hoary Bat, Canada Lynx, Fisher, Grizzly Bear, Pileated Woodpecker, Common Loon, Northern Alligator Lizard, Westslope Cutthroat Trout, Pygmy Whitefish, Bull Trout, Sheathed Slug, Crested Shieldfern, Creeping Sedge, Giant Helleborine, Slender Cottongrass and A. Lichen. These species are found throughout this region and not necessarily at this particular spot. No immediate impact.

**Wetlands** - *Consult and assess whether the apparent wetland is a functional wetland (according to COE definitions), and whether the wetland resource would be impacted.*

*Determination:* No wetland identified. No impact.

**Ponds** - *For ponds, consult and assess whether existing wildlife, waterfowl, or fisheries resources would be impacted.*

*Determination:* No pond. No impact

**GEOLOGY/SOIL QUALITY, STABILITY AND MOISTURE** - *Assess whether there will be degradation of soil quality, alteration of soil stability, or moisture content. Assess whether the soils are heavy in salts that could cause saline seep.*

*Determination:* The majority of soils in this area are Andeptic Cryoboralfs-Andic Cryochrepts complex, hilly with a moderately low to moderately high capacity to transmit water. This soil does not have a saline salt classification.

**VEGETATION COVER, QUANTITY AND QUALITY/NOXIOUS WEEDS** - *Assess impacts to existing vegetative cover. Assess whether the proposed project would result in the establishment or spread of noxious weeds.*

*Determination:* Some vegetation will be replaced with footprints of building and drive.

**AIR QUALITY** - *Assess whether there will be a deterioration of air quality or adverse effects on vegetation due to increased air pollutants.*

*Determination:* No impact.

**HISTORICAL AND ARCHEOLOGICAL SITES** - *Assess whether there will be degradation of unique archeological or historical sites in the vicinity of the proposed project if it is on State or Federal Lands.*

*Determination:* NA – project not located on State or Federal Lands.

**DEMANDS ON ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES OF LAND, WATER, AND ENERGY** - *Assess any other impacts on environmental resources of land, water and energy not already addressed.*

*Determination:* No other impacts.

## HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

**LOCALLY ADOPTED ENVIRONMENTAL PLANS AND GOALS** - Assess whether the proposed project is inconsistent with any locally adopted environmental plans and goals.

*Determination:* Uses appears to be in compliance with zoning regulations.

**ACCESS TO AND QUALITY OF RECREATIONAL AND WILDERNESS ACTIVITIES** - Assess whether the proposed project will impact access to or the quality of recreational and wilderness activities.

*Determination:* No impact.

**HUMAN HEALTH** - Assess whether the proposed project impacts on human health.

*Determination:* No impact.

**PRIVATE PROPERTY** - Assess whether there are any government regulatory impacts on private property rights.

Yes\_\_\_ NoXXX If yes, analyze any alternatives considered that could reduce, minimize, or eliminate the regulation of private property rights.

*Determination:* No impact.

**OTHER HUMAN ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES** - For routine actions of limited environmental impact, the following may be addressed in a checklist fashion.

*Impacts on:*

- (a) Cultural uniqueness and diversity? No impact
- (b) Local and state tax base and tax revenues? To be assessed
- (c) Existing land uses? No impact
- (d) Quantity and distribution of employment? No impact
- (e) Distribution and density of population and housing? No impact
- (f) Demands for government services? No impact
- (g) Industrial and commercial activity? No impact
- (h) Utilities? To be brought into property
- (i) Transportation? Minimal impact

(j) Safety? No impact

(k) Other appropriate social and economic circumstances? None

**2. Secondary and cumulative impacts on the physical environment and human population:**

Secondary Impacts No impacts

Cumulative Impacts No impacts

**3. Describe any mitigation/stipulation measures:** None

**4. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives to the proposed action, including the no action alternative, if an alternative is reasonably available and prudent to consider:** Project should be completed as proposed

**PART III. Conclusion**

**1. Preferred Alternative**

**2. Comments and Responses**

**3. Finding:**

Yes\_\_\_ NoXX Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required?

If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action: Personal property

Name of person(s) responsible for preparation of EA:

Name: Kathy Olsen

Title: Water Resource Specialist

Date: March 12, 2015